

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PRS-01 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2163

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 8904

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PK, US

SUBJ: PAKISTAN TIMES REPORT ON MILITARY SUPPLY

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 8842; B. ISLAMABAD 8851; C. STATE 227696

1. BOTH ENGLISH AND URDU PAPERS SEPTEMBER 25 CARRY ARTICLES THAT MFA SPOKESMAN HAS EXPRESSED QUOTE SURPRISE CLOSE QUOTE AT THE QUOTE CATEGORICAL STATEMENTS ABOUT PAKISTAN'S MILITARY PURCHASES CLOSE QUOTE CONTAINED IN BURKI'S ARTICLE REPORTED REFTEL A. STORY ADDS THAT SPOKESMAN DESCRIBED BURKI REPORT AS QUOTE HIGHLY SPECULATIVE AND NOT BASED ON OFFICIAL SOURCES. IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT PAKISTAN IS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE GAPS AND DEFICIENCIES IN ITS MODEST DEFENSE CAPABILITY AND IS MAKING EFFORTS TO OVERCOME THESE. END QUOTE.

2. UPON RECEIPT OF PRESS GUIDANCE CONTAINED REFTEL B, EMBOFF CALLED MFA DIRGEN FOR AMERICAS KHURSHID HYDER AND PASSED ON, FOR MFA'S BACKGROUND, DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE TO BE USED ON IF ASKED BASIS. MRS. HYDER THOUGHT THERE WAS NO BASIC CONFLICT BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS PRESS
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GUIDANCE AND MFA SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT. SHE SAID MFA

HAD RECEIVED INQUIRIES FROM PRESS ABOUT ARTICLE AND WANTED IT KNOWN THAT IT WAS NOT OFFICIALLY INSPIRED STORY. SHE ADDED MFA ASSUMES THAT BURKI PIECED STORY TOGETHER FROM SEVERAL SOURCES.

3. EMBASSY'S ANALYSIS OF ARTICLE REMAINS AS REPORTED REFTEL B. WE NOTE THAT MFA SPOKESMAN DID NOT DENY BASIC ACCURACY OF BURKI STORY. WE BELIEVE GOP IS SENSITIVE TO SPECULATION ABOUT ARMS PURCHASES, HOWEVER, AND OBVIOUSLY SENSITIVE TO EFFECT SUCH SPECULATION MIGHT HAVE BOTH DOMESTICALLY AND ABROAD. AS MRS. HYDER OBSERVED, THE GOP THEREFORE FOUND IT ADVISABLE TO PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN ITSELF AND PAK TIMES REPORT. BYROADE

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Message Attributes

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